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IMPROVED POT AND PAN WASHING MACHINE

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to improvements in a pot and pan washing machine. More specifically the present invention relates to improvements within the wash tank portion of a pot and pan washing machine, including an improved pump, improved intake manifold and improved jet nozzles for the wash tank. Additionally, the present invention relates to an improved joint and method for connecting two separate portions of a pot and pan washing machine into a single unit.

Background of the Invention

Pot and pan washing machines, of the type used in restaurants, institutions and other eating facilities often involve a large wash tank or basin in which water is circulated about the pots and pans to provide a washing action. One such machine is described in U.S. Patent No. 4,773,436 issued to Cantrell et al., the specification of which is incorporated herein by reference. The machine of Cantrell includes a wash tank with jets located at an elevated position along the rear wall of the wash tank. The tank is filled with water to a level above the position of the jets. Pots and pans are placed in the wash tank, and a pump is activated to draw water from within the wash tank and direct it through the jets to create a jet stream. Each jet directs its jet stream toward the bottom wall of the wash tank, the bottom wall then deflects the jet stream upward and towards the front wall of the tank. The front wall then deflects the upward moving jet stream towards the rear wall of the tank, and the rear wall deflects the jet stream downward and back towards the front

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1 wall along the bottom wall. The combination of deflections of the jet stream from the bottom,
2 front and rear walls provides a rolling washing action within the wash tank.

3 The basic components of the wash tank of the pot and pan washing machine of the prior
4 art are shown in Fig. 1. Wash tank 10 includes side walls 12 and 14, rear wall 16, front wall 18
5 and bottom wall 19. A pump can be attached to either side wall; in the embodiment shown in Fig.
6 1, pump 50 is attached to right sidewall 14. An impeller located within pump 50 is driven by
7 electric motor 56. The impeller draws fluid into pump inlet 52 through an intake port (not shown)
8 located in sidewall 14. The fluid is then discharged from the pump through pump outlet 54 and

9 ~~into outlet manifold 60. Outlet manifold 60 includes a ninety degree turn, and several other~~
10 turns, to direct the fluid across the back side of rear wall 16 and out jet nozzles 20 which are
11 protruding through and extending from rear wall 16. The intake port associated with pump inlet
12 52 is covered by perforated intake manifold 30. Intake manifold 30 includes handle 36 and is
13 removably supported within wash tank 10 for easy cleaning. Intake manifold 30 fits tightly
14 between outer runner 32 and inner runner 34, each of which extends vertically from bottom wall
15 19. Heating element 40 is positioned between intake manifold 30 and sidewall 14 for its
16 protection and to maximize the use of space.

17 Although the prior art pot and pan washing machine disclosed in U.S. Patent No.
18 4,773,436 provides an exceptional wash action, many of the components discussed above hinder
19 the overall efficiency and performance of the machine. Several of the components of the prior

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1 art machine that hinder performance and efficiency are the pump, the intake manifold and the jet
2 nozzles.

3 As discussed above, the pump of the prior art draws fluid in through pump inlet **52** in a
4 first direction and then discharges the fluid in a direction perpendicular to the inlet direction. The
5 path of the fluid being discharged from pump **50** must be diverted ninety degrees in a first
6 direction, then upward and sideways across rear wall **16** to reach jet nozzles **20**. Diverting the
7 water path requires a great deal of energy, which significantly reduces the efficiency of the pump.
8 Furthermore, a substantial amount of additional outlet manifold construction is necessary to effect
9 ~~the diversion of the fluid path. This additional manifold construction increases the overall cost~~

10 of producing the pot and pan washing machine. Thus it is desirable to provide an improved pump
11 for a pot and pan washing machine that streamlines the fluid path of the machine.

12 Another disadvantage of the pump of the prior art is that motor **56** mounts orthogonal to
13 sidewall **14**. This increases the overall footprint of the machine from side to side. As most pot
14 and pan washing machines are of substantial length due to the use of multiple sink basins, it is of
15 great importance to reduce the overall footprint as much as possible to maximize the use of space
16 in a kitchen. If a pump could be designed to orient the pump motor parallel to the side of the
17 wash tank, the side to side footprint of the machine could be reduced, thereby maximizing usable
18 space within the kitchen.

19 Additionally, in the event that motor **50** requires servicing, it must be removed axially
20 from the pump. This requires a substantial amount of space to the side of the machine to facilitate

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1 the motor removal. Unfortunately, most kitchens have a limited amount of space, and the already
2 large footprint of the pot and pan washing machine significantly restricts the amount of unused
3 space allotted to the side of the machine. Therefore, it is desirable to provide a pump for a pot
4 and pan washing machine which can be removed in a direction parallel to the side wall of the
5 machine, rather than perpendicular thereto. Additionally, it is desirable to provide such a pump,
6 without the need for an intricate manifold arrangement.

7 Another component of the pot and pan machine that reduces the overall efficiency and
8 performance of the machine is the intake manifold. Intake manifold 30 is designed to be
9 ~~positioned along the side of the wash tank, reducing the usable wash area within the wash tank.~~

10 Also, because water is being pulled toward the side of the wash tank, pots and pans within the
11 wash tank will tend to migrate toward the intake side. This pot migration is undesirable because
12 it reduces the effect of the wash action of the machine as pots and pans are clumped together along
13 one side.

14 Furthermore, the prior art intake manifold is not scalable. This is because, generally, the
15 size of the wash tank is increased by increasing the length from side to side of the tank without
16 changing the front to back width which makes up the width of intake manifold 30. As the size of
17 the wash tank increases, so does the required flow rate of the pump. This results in an increased
18 draw through the intake, thereby increasing the effects of pot migration and increasing the amount
19 of debris collected by the intake manifold. Therefore, it is desirable to provide a scalable intake

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1 manifold that reduces the effect of pot migration and that does not result in increased manifold
2 vacuum when the length of the wash tank is increased.

3 Another drawback of the prior art manifold is related to the purpose of the manifold, which
4 is to prevent debris in the wash tank from reaching the pump. Much of this debris will be drawn
5 towards and collected by the intake vacuum. Thus, intake manifold 30 is removable to allow for
6 routine cleaning of the debris from the manifold. If the manifold is not routinely cleaned, the
7 efficiency and performance of the pot and pan washing machine will be significantly inhibited.
8 Therefore, it is desirable to provide an intake manifold that is essentially self cleaning.

9 ~~One final component of the prior art machine is the jet nozzle. Jet nozzle 20 protrudes~~
10 from rear wall 16 of the pot and pan washing machine. Thus, the effectiveness of the jet stream
11 on objects near the rear wall of the machine is greatly reduced since the jet stream directly exiting
12 the nozzle initiates in a position away from the rear wall. Objects near the rear wall will only be
13 impacted by the jet stream after it has been deflected back to the rear wall from the front wall.
14 Therefore, it is desirable to provide a jet nozzle design that will permit the jet stream exiting the
15 nozzle to more immediately impact objects located near the rear wall of the washing machine.

16 In addition to the wash tank, the pot and pan washing machines systems of the prior art
17 usually include additional sink basins or work surfaces for 1) scraping and scrapping, 2) rinsing
18 and 3) sanitizing. All basins or work areas of a washing machine system are preferably positioned
19 along side of each other in their order of use for more efficient operation of the washing machine
20 (the preferred order of use is scrapping/scrapping, washing, rinsing, sanitizing). Additionally,

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1 it is often more efficient, and provides a more aesthetically pleasing appearance, to construct the
2 entire pot and pan washing machine as a single unit at the factory. Unfortunately, such is often
3 impossible due to installation and transportation limitations.

4 Very few kitchens have entrances large enough to make installation of a four basin washing
5 machine system as a single unit practical. Therefore most pot and pan washing machines are
6 constructed as a two-part (or more as necessary) unit which is assembled onsite during installation.

7 As the pot and pan washing machine is preferably constructed of stainless steel, the preferred
8 method for joining two sections of the machine into a single unit is to weld the sections together.

9 ~~While welding is a rather routine method of construction at the factory, it is not very practical for~~
10 onsite assembly and installation. This is due to the difficulty of transporting and operating proper
11 welding and grinding equipment onsite to make a smooth weld. Therefore, seems that are welded
12 onsite generally tend to have a less than desirable appearance.

13 An alternative to welding two sections of a washing machine system together is to bolt the
14 two sections together. Most often a bolted connection is as unattractive as, or even more
15 unattractive than, a poorly welded seem. Additionally, because a bolted connection results in a
16 slight gap between the two sections of the washing machine system in which debris may collect,
17 NSF standards require the inclusion of a two inch gap between the sections to facilitate cleaning.
18 This results in a even greater reduction in the aesthetic appearance of the washing machine system
19 and increases the size of the footprint of the system, or else reduces the usable volume of the
20 basins. Therefore it is desirable to develop an attractive, non-welded field joint for assembling

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multiple components of a washing machine system into a single unit having no gaps between the joined components.

Summary of the Invention

A principal object of the present invention is to provide a cost efficient pot and pan washing machine having exceptional efficiency and performance characteristics. Another object of the present invention is to increase the efficiency and performance of a pot and pan washing machine through the use of an inventive pump. Yet another object of the present invention is to increase the efficiency and performance of the pot and pan washing machine through the use of an inventive intake manifold. Another object of the instant invention is to further increase the efficiency and performance of the pot and pan washing machine through the use of an inventive jet nozzle. A further object of the instant invention is to increase the efficiency of installation of the pot and pan washing machine through the use of an inventive field joint.

According to the above described objects of the instant invention, a pot and pan washing machine is provided including:

a wash tank including a bottom wall, a rear wall, a front wall and two side walls extending upwardly from said bottom wall;
an intake port in one of said side walls, said intake port being adjacent to said bottom and rear walls;
an outlet manifold on said rear wall;

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1 a self-draining parallel flow pump including:

2 a pump inlet associated with said intake port, said pump inlet having an intake path

3 in a first direction, and

4 a pump outlet associated with said outlet manifold, said pump outlet having an

5 outlet path in a second direction, said second direction being substantially

6 parallel to said first direction;

7 at least one jet nozzle in association with said outlet manifold to expel at a predetermined

8 angle a jet stream of fluid from said outlet manifold, said jet nozzle including:

9 ~~a directing tube flush connected to said rear wall and extending into said outlet~~

10 manifold; and

11 a perforated intake manifold within said wash tank positioned within a portion of the jet

12 stream of said jet nozzle and positioned to cover said intake port, said intake

13 manifold including an upper portion extending in away from said rear wall towards

14 said front wall at a predetermined downward angle towards said bottom wall, and

15 said predetermined downward angle of said upper portion of said intake manifold

16 corresponds to the predetermined angle of the jet stream of said nozzle.

17 The inventive pump features a generally helical housing, having an inlet direction generally
18 parallel to the outlet or discharge direction. The parallel flow of the pump increases the efficiency
19 of the pump and thus the pot and pan washing machine by streamlining the fluid path to reduce
20 the amount of diversion of the fluid path required within the machine. In addition to increasing

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1 efficiency of operation of the machine, the use of a parallel flow pump increases the cost
2 efficiency of producing the pot and pan washing machine by significantly reducing the amount of
3 additional manifold tubing required to divert the fluid path.

4 The generally helical design of the pump housing of the instant invention permits the pump
5 motor to be mounted parallel to the side of the pot and pan washing machine. By mounting the
6 pump motor in this manner, the side to side footprint of the pot and pan washing machine is
7 significantly reduced. Additionally, the orientation of the motor relative to the housing permits
8 easy removal of the pump motor from the pump housing, even in confined spaces, because the
-9 pump motor is removed in a direction parallel to the side of the pot and pan washing machine.

10 Another object of the instant invention is to provide an improved pump that increases
11 sanitation and improves pump life. In accordance with this objective, the pump of the instant
12 invention is self-draining. The generally helical housing of the inventive pump includes a raised
13 volute and a lower intake chamber. An intake port, or pump inlet, is located in the chamber, and
14 an outlet port, or pump outlet, is located in the volute. A portion of the pump inlet comprises the
15 lower most position of the pump housing, permitting fluid to flow, by gravity, from the chamber
16 through the pump inlet and into the wash tank. A drainage passage extends from the lower most
17 portion of the raised volute to the lower chamber, allowing for complete drainage of the volute
18 into the chamber and thereby into the wash tank.

19 The intake manifold of the instant invention is positioned along the length of the rear wall
20 of the washing machine. This position provides several unique advantages to that of the prior art.

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1 Firstly, the intake manifold is positioned in relatively dead space along the bottom of the rear wall
2 of the wash tank, rather than in usable wash space along the side wall of the wash tank. This
3 space is considered "dead" space because it is the last space impacted by the deflected jet stream.
4 Furthermore, since the side to side length of the wash tank is usually greater than the front to back
5 width, the intake manifold of the instant invention can provide the same intake area as the prior
6 art manifold while having a lower profile. Additionally, the inventive intake manifold can be
7 contoured to assist in the rolling wash action of the pot and pan washing machine by gradually
8 deflecting the path of the jet stream downward and forward. In the prior art pot and pan washing
9 machine, the seam between the rear wall and the bottom wall is filleted or rolled to assist in the
10 rolling wash action of the machine. The intake manifold of the instant invention can be used to
11 perform this function.

12 Positioning the intake manifold along the rear wall of the washing machine allows the
13 manifold to be scalable to any size machine. This is because the size of the machine is usually
14 increased or decreased through the addition or removal of jets along the length of the rear wall
15 of the machine and the increase or decrease of the rear wall length. The width from front to back
16 of the machine is usually unaltered regardless of machine size. Thus, as the length of the machine
17 increases, so does the length of the intake manifold and the proportional intake area. As higher
18 volume motors are used with the larger wash tanks, the intake vacuum will remain unchanged due
19 to the increased intake area.

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1 Another advantage of the position of the intake of the instant invention is that the intake
2 area can be significantly increased from the intake area of the prior art machine. This reduces the
3 suction or vacuum levels, resulting in more efficient cleaning of pots and pans and elimination of
4 pot migration. The reduced suction will also reduce the amount of debris that collects on the
5 intake manifold, virtually eliminating the need to routinely remove and clean the manifold as
6 required by the design of the prior art. Any minor pot migration that might exist will be toward
7 the rear wall, eliminating the clumping effect associated with the prior art. Additionally, pot
8 migration toward the rear wall will be counterbalanced with the force of the jet stream and the
9 rolling wash action, resulting in a more efficient wash action.

10 The intake manifold of the instant invention is positioned within a portion of the jet stream
11 emanating from the jet nozzle. This effectively blows off any debris that may collect on the intake
12 manifold, making the manifold virtually self-cleaning. The use of flush mounted jet nozzles
13 assists in this cleaning action by positioning the full force of the initial, non-deflected jet stream
14 closer to the rear wall of the machine than that provided by the prior art. The angle of the intake
15 manifold roughly corresponds to the angle of the jet stream emanating from the jet nozzle to
16 prevent substantial deflection of the jet stream by the intake manifold before the jet stream reaches
17 the bottom wall of the wash tank.

18 An inventive field joint and method is provided for assembling multiple portions or
19 segments of the pot and pan washing machine into a single unit without the use of either a welded
20 or a bolted connection. This inventive field joint increases the usable basin volume within a given

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1 footprint by eliminating the NSF required gap. The inventive field joint includes a hemmed edge
2 located along an edge of a generally flat side of a first sink basin, and a lip located along an edge
3 of a generally flat side of a second sink basin. A jog extends inward from one of the generally
4 flat sides of the first or second sink basins such that the edge of the associated sink basin extends
5 inward of the generally flat side of that sink basin. The lip is positioned over the hemmed edge
6 forcing the generally flat sides of the first and second sink basins into tight engagement with one
7 another. The inwardly extending jog assures tight engagement of the generally flat sides of the
8 sink basins without any gap therebetween; thus providing an attractive, non-welded seem. The
9 outer sides of the sink basins that have been joined together can be covered with a decorative trim
10 piece to enhance the aesthetically pleasing appearance of the washing machine.

11 The foregoing and other objects are intended to be illustrative of the invention and are not
12 meant in a limiting sense. Many possible embodiments of the invention may be made and will
13 be readily evident upon a study of the following specification and accompanying drawings
14 comprising a part thereof. Various features and subcombinations of invention may be employed
15 without reference to other features and subcombinations. Other objects and advantages of this
16 invention will become apparent from the following description taken in connection with the
17 accompanying drawings, wherein is set forth by way of illustration and example, an embodiment
18 of this invention.

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Description of the Drawings

Preferred embodiments of the invention, illustrative of the best modes in which the applicant has contemplated applying the principles, are set forth in the following description and are shown in the drawings and are particularly and distinctly pointed out and set forth in the appended claims.

Figure 1 is a perspective view from above of a prior art pot and pan washing machine with a portion of the front and one side wall of the wash tank cut away to better illustrate certain interior construction details.

Figure 2 is a fragmentary perspective view from above of the pot and pan washing machine of the instant invention.

Figure 3 is a fragmentary perspective elevation view taken from the left hand side of the pot and pan washing machine shown in Fig. 2.

Figure 4 is a fragmentary rear elevation view of the pot and pan washing machine of the instant invention.

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1 Figure 5 is an exploded perspective view of an inventive pump for the pot and pan washing
2 machine of the instant invention.

3
4 Figure 6 is a perspective view taken from above of the housing of the pump shown in Fig.
5 5, showing the interior of the pump housing.

6
7 Figure 7 is a detailed perspective view taken from the side of a flush mounted jet nozzle
8 for the pot and pan washing machine shown in Fig. 2, showing the outlet manifold and rear wall
9 of the washing machine in section and partial cutaway.

10
11 Figure 8 is a fragmentary sectional view showing a non-welded field joint for connecting
12 multiple portions of a pot and pan washing machine.

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Description of the Preferred Embodiment

Referring to the drawing figures, therein is shown an optimum form of the subject pot and pan washing machine with essentially all features usable to increase performance, versatility and efficiency therewithin. Preferred embodiments of the present invention are hereinafter described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

The operation of the pot and pan washing machine described hereinafter is substantially similar to the operation of the prior art machine described above. The instant invention provides significant features that increase the performance, versatility and efficiency of the pot and pan washing machine.

Referring to Fig. 2, a preferred embodiment of the wash tank of the inventive pot and pan washing machine is shown. The wash tank/basin of the instant invention is constructed in essentially the same manner as the wash tanks of the prior art. Wash tank **110** includes left side wall **112**, right side wall **114**, rear wall **116**, front wall **118** and bottom wall **119** constructed in the same or similar manner, and of the same or similar materials as the wash tank of the prior art. Figure 2 shows the unique components of the pot and pan washing machine as they are located in association with wash tank **110**. Parallel flow pump **150** is attached to left side wall **112** in the embodiment shown in Fig. 2. As has been discussed with respect to the prior art, pump **150** can be attached to either left side wall **112** or right side wall **114** of wash tank **110**. Flush mounted jet nozzles **120** are mounted along rear wall in essentially the same location as the jet nozzles of

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1 the prior art discussed above. Intake manifold **130** is mounted within wash tank **110** along the
2 bottom portion of rear wall **116**, below nozzles **120**.

3
4 *Parallel Flow Pump*

5 Figures 3 and 4 show pump **150** mounted to the exterior of wash tank **110**. Although
6 pump **150** of the preferred embodiment is constructed entirely of stainless steel; any suitable
7 material can be used. Pump inlet **152** associates with and connects to an intake port (not
8 shown) passing through right side wall **112**. Pump outlet **154** associates with and connects to
9 outlet manifold **160**. Outlet manifold **160** comprises a generally straight tube that extends
10 across the exterior side of rear wall **116** to connect pump outlet **154** to jet nozzles **120**. The
11 outlet manifold of the disclosed embodiment comprises a square or rectangular cross-section;
12 however, the tubing of the outlet manifold can comprise a cross-section of virtually any shape.
13 Pump motor **156** protrudes axially from the pump housing in a direction generally parallel to
14 right side wall **112**.

15 Fluid is drawn into pump inlet **152** in a first inlet direction that is generally orthogonal
16 to side wall **112**. The fluid is then discharged from pump outlet **154** in a second direction that
17 is generally parallel to the inlet direction. The fluid is discharged directly into outlet manifold
18 **160** which extends in the direction of the fluid path. Because the fluid is not diverted by the
19 outlet manifold, the efficiency of the pump is greatly increased.

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1 Figure 5 shows an exploded view of pump **150** assembly of the instant invention.
2 Rotatable shaft **158** extends axially from the inner end of pump motor **156**. Generally annular
3 seal plate **180** fits over shaft **158** for engagement with the inner end of pump motor **156**. The
4 seal plate is bolted or otherwise fastened to the inner end of pump motor **156**. After seal plate
5 **180** is associated with the pump motor, annular shaft seal **184** is positioned along shaft **158** in
6 close engagement with seal plate **180**. Impeller **186** is positioned on the end of shaft **158** in
7 contact with seal **184**, and bolt **188** is inserted through the center of impeller **186** and into
8 threaded engagement with interior threads of shaft **158**. The bolt is torqued to provides tight
9 engagement of the impeller with the shaft and seal **184** resulting in a water-tight enclosure
10 surrounding shaft **158**.

11 Once the impeller, seal and seal plate are properly connected to motor **156**, the entire
12 assembly (motor, seal plate, seal and impeller) can be connected to the pump housing. Pump
13 housing **155** is a generally helical housing including intake chamber **192** and raised volute **194**.
14 A cylindrical passage extends axially through both chamber **192** and volute **194** of housing
15 **155**. Volute **194** is in an axially raised position relative to chamber **192**. The motor assembly
16 is inserted, impeller first, into cylindrical passage **190** of housing **155**. Impeller **186** will
17 extend into volute **194**. Anti-rotational cross-member **182** extends from seal plate **180** into
18 chamber **192** in a direction generally perpendicular to the seal plate. Seal plate **180** is bolted or
19 otherwise attached to housing **155** to provide a water tight seal between the housing and motor
20 **156**.

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1 As is shown in Fig. 6, drainage passage **196** extends from the lower most portion of
2 volute **194** into chamber **192**. The lower most wall of the chamber angles downward toward
3 inlet **152**. As is shown in Fig. 4, the pump is mounted to the wash tank such that the bottom
4 portion of intake port **152** is the lower most position of pump housing **155**. Therefore, when
5 the pump motor is not operating, gravitational forces will drive all water within volute **194**
6 through drainage passage **196**, into chamber **192**, down the lower wall of chamber **192** and out
7 pump inlet **152** into the wash tank. Thus the pump of the preferred embodiment is self-
8 draining when not in use. This provides for improved sanitary conditions and increased pump
9 life.

10 In operation, A/C motor **156** is energized to rotate shaft **158**. Shaft **158** rotates
11 impeller **186**. The impeller has an enclosed face which results in shaft-side suction for the
12 impeller. Water is drawn into chamber **192** from the shaft side of impeller **186**. The impeller
13 creates a rotational movement of fluid within chamber **192**. Anti-rotation member **182** directs
14 the rotating fluid from the chamber into volute **194**. The fluid is thrust into volute **194**
15 through the vanes of the rotating impeller. Volute **194** directs the fluid outward where it is
16 discharged into outlet manifold **160**.

17 The motor, seal plate, shaft seal and impeller can be removed as a single unit for easy
18 servicing. Because the pump motor extends axially from the housing, and parallel to the side
19 of the wash tank, the motor assembly can be easily removed and replaced regardless of space
20 limitations to the side of the wash tank.

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Intake Manifold and Flush Mounted Jet Nozzles

Intake manifold **130** is shown installed within wash tank **110** in Fig. 2. Intake manifold **130** includes an upper portion **132** extending outwardly from rear wall **116** toward front wall **118**, and lower portion **134** extending from the front end of upper portion **132**. In the preferred embodiment, the upper portion of intake manifold **130** is angled downward from rear wall **116**. The downward angle of the upper portion of intake manifold **130** corresponds to the downward angle of jet nozzle **120** which directs a fluid path toward the front portion of bottom wall **119** as described above with respect to the prior art washing machine.

Portions of the intake manifold are perforated to allow fluid to be drawn into manifold **130** by the pump. The amount of perforations can vary depending upon the amount of vacuum desired and the flow rate of the pump. Increasing the number and size of the perforations will result in a decreased vacuum and increased efficiency. Perforations can be located only on upper portion **132**, only on lower portion **134**, or on both upper portion **132** and lower portion **134**.

The jet nozzles of the preferred embodiment are flush mounted to rear wall **116** of the wash tank. An annular outer ring **122** is mounted to rear wall **116** on the inner side of the wash tank. Directing tube **126** extends from an inner circumference of outer ring **122**, through a hole in rear wall **116** and into outlet manifold **160**. The directing tube diverts the fluid path moving through the outlet manifold into a jet stream. The directing tube has a predetermined angle to direct the jet stream toward the front portion of bottom wall **119**. Semi-circular

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1 splash shield **124** extends in a generally orthogonal direction from outer ring **122**. The outer
2 ring can be mounted to rear wall **116** with any suitable means, including bolts or screws. In
3 the preferred embodiment, threaded shafts **128** extend from outer ring **122** in a generally
4 perpendicular direction through rear wall **116**. Bolts can be threaded onto threaded shafts **128**
5 from the outer side of rear wall **116**, leaving jet nozzle **120** with a clean, unobstructed surface
6 inside the wash tank. In an alternate embodiment, directing tube **126** can be mounted directly
7 to the rear wall of the wash tank by welding or any other suitable means of connection.

8 In the preferred embodiment of the instant invention, upper portion **132** of the intake
9 manifold is positioned within the fluid path of nozzle **120**. The jet stream from flush mounted
10 nozzle **120** impacts the intake manifold at a position generally near rear wall **116** and skims
11 across the surface of the upper portion of intake manifold **130**. Intake manifold **130** is thereby
12 self-cleaning in that jet nozzle **120** blows any debris away from the perforations of the intake
13 manifold. The preferred embodiment of the intake manifold includes the upper and lower
14 portions that are connected to rear wall **116** and bottom wall **119**, respectively to form an
15 inclosure within the intake manifold. Additional walls can be utilized if it is not desired to
16 have the intake manifold connected to both the rear and bottom walls. The intake manifold
17 can be made removable in a manner similar to that of the prior art; however, since the
18 preferred embodiment is self-cleaning (described above), the inventive intake manifold can be
19 permanently connect within the wash tank using any means known in the art. A heater can be
20 positioned within the intake inclosure for safety and protection.

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1 In operation, wash tank **110** is filled full of water, soap and pots and pans to a level
2 above jet nozzles **120**. The soapy water, or fluid is drawn through the perforations in intake
3 manifold **130** by pump **150**. The fluid enters pump **150** through inlet **152** in a first direction
4 that is generally parallel to rear wall **116**. The fluid is discharged from the pump through
5 outlet **154** into outlet manifold **160**. Jet nozzle **120** diverts the fluid from the outlet manifold
6 into a jet stream directed toward the front portion of bottom wall **119**. The jet stream skims
7 across the upper portion of intake manifold **130** as it travels from the jet nozzle to the bottom
8 wall of the wash tank. The jet stream is deflected from bottom wall into a wash action in a
9 manner substantially similar to that of the prior art.

10 The pot and pan washing machine of the instant invention and its components are all
11 preferably constructed of stainless steel to increase the life of the machine; however, any other
12 suitable material known in the art may also be utilized.

14 *Non-Welded Field Joint*

15 Figure 8 shows the non-welded field joint of the instant invention. Field joint **200** is
16 utilized to connect two separate sink portions of a pot and pan washing machine system
17 together as a single unit. The sink portions that can be connected by the inventive field joint
18 include but are not limited to sink basin to sink basin, sink basin to counter top, and counter
19 top to counter top.

1 In Fig. 8, field joint **200** is used to provide a sink basin to sink basin connection.
2 Hemmed edge **214** is formed along an edge of a generally flat side, **212**, of first sink basin
3 **210**. Lip **224** is formed along an edge of a generally flat side, **222**, of second sink basin **220**.
4 Jog **230** is located generally near the edge of side **222** and extends inwardly, towards the inside
5 of sink basin **220** and positions lip **224** generally inward of side **222**. (alternatively, the
6 inwardly extending jog could be located near the edge of side **212** to position hemmed edge
7 **214** generally inward of side **212**).

8 During an installation, the two sink basins are brought together into close engagement
9 with one another. Lip **224** is positioned over hemmed edge **214** such that lip **224** surrounds
10 hemmed edge **214**. The displacement caused by inwardly extending jog **230** will result in
11 forcing side **212** and side **222** into tight engagement with one another.

12 No gaps will be present where the generally flat portions of sides **212** and **222** are
13 brought into engagement. Nevertheless, gap **240** will be present between the inwardly
14 extended portion of jog **230** and the generally flat portion of side **212**. This gap can be filled
15 with silicon or some other suitable sealant during installation. Other gaps may exist where
16 surfaces that are not flat coincide with the flat portions of sides **212** and **222**. For example,
17 gap **250** is formed where the bottom side of sink basing **220** coincides with sides **212** and **222**.
18 This gap can also be filled with silicon. Additionally, trim piece **260** can be attached to sink
19 basin **220** using 3MTM VHBTM tape, or any other suitable adhesive that is known in the art.

INVENTOR: INCH et al.
TITLE: IMPROVED POT AND PAN WASHING MACHINE

1 Additional trim pieces may be utilized to conceal the field joint and thus increase the aesthetic
2 appearance of the assembly.

3 In the foregoing description, certain terms have been used for brevity, clearness and
4 understanding; but no unnecessary limitations are to be implied therefrom beyond the
5 requirements of the prior art, because such terms are used for descriptive purposes and are
6 intended to be broadly construed. Moreover, the description and illustration of the inventions
7 is by way of example, and the scope of the inventions is not limited to the exact details shown
8 or described.

9 Certain changes may be made in embodying the above invention, and in the
10 construction thereof, without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. It is
11 intended that all matter contained in the above description and shown in the accompanying
12 drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not meant in a limiting sense.

13 Having now described the features, discoveries and principles of the invention, the
14 manner in which the inventive pot and pan washing machine is constructed and used, the
15 characteristics of the construction, and advantageous, new and useful results obtained; the new
16 and useful structures, devices, elements, arrangements, parts and combinations, are set forth in
17 the appended claims.

18 It is also to be understood that the following claims are intended to cover all of the
19 generic and specific features of the invention herein described, and all statements of the scope
of the invention which, as a matter of language, might be said to fall therebetween.